

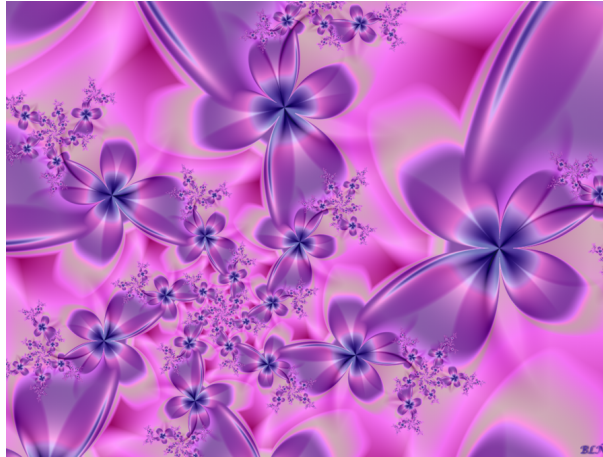


## ***Ch. 17 – daily "Non-Duality & Science" blogs***

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#### Reality 146

When you inquire more, which seems very subtle now will be seen to be not-so-subtle. It will seem silly how people take what is merely assumed in the mind to be true such as, "this is far too subtle."

Generally, answers are given to questions at different levels of understanding. From where it was said: "nothing springs from the Self", we are speaking from No-Birth, no-Creation, the Final Truth. If we're speaking in more relative terms, we may say that the self alone is the source of all. From where else could anything like "this" come from, except from that single Existence ? All comes by the Self, for the Self, from the Self, & returns to the Self. This is the Cosmic view of the Absolute. When we speak of the Unborn, even the Cosmos does not exist. If you take "this" for granted & are take asking about "this", what else could it be but the Self ? For, where else could "this" come from, except from the Self – the Infinite Consciousness ?

When there is instruction such as that you should not take what occurs to be your own doing, but rather see it as the will of God, or the doings of that Infinite Being or Infinite Consciousness, this is given for the purpose of causing the Ego to subside. This is to cause one to look in the direction of the Absolute rather than conceiving the Ego as being the factor that makes everything happen.

Naturally, we should not misinterpret such things and say, "God, the Supreme Being does all, so what I need to do is put in my requests." This in a sense is the traditional sense of "prayer". Agreed however, God does not like self-centered demands. The rule that "whoever yells the loudest wins" does not apply to God. The idea that God responds because of much speaking, & that loudly, this too does not apply. If you are interested in something, the next step would be to ask only for *That* Divine itself & not some actual objective thing. Then, Detachment is born, & you know that the Supreme alone matters.

If you recognize that the Supreme alone matters & that everything happens by the Will of the Supreme, & not by our own doing, & you do not want whatever you desire to necessarily occur, for you want only the Supreme itself, then comes the question: "how are you to realize the Supreme" ?

Thereupon, Self-Inquiry becomes very meaningful. The Supreme is to be found within. Then, you strive to find out, "Who am I ?" At that point you are off the level of desire, including prayerful desire, or desire manifesting as prayer.

Now it is certainly beneficial if one asks for the sake of others, & not simply for oneself. From a still deeper perspective, you are still asking for yourself, for the satisfaction of seeing that happen. You're still wishing the situation to be a particular way. Although it is not as selfish, in the usual sense of the word, it is still asking that the Supreme, the Absolute, should do something that would be nicer than what it is presently seeming to do.

When it is seen that the Supreme does everything perfectly, then one remains silent. Then *birth, death, creation, destruction*, & all else is perfect. If you look at it that way, everything is perfect. However the things themselves are all fleeting, & ultimately not real. All of them are subject to *origination, existence, growth, maturation, decay, & destruction*. So where does that "perfection" come from ? The Scriptures would say: quote that is the "perfect fullness". "This" is perfectly full. All that is "perfect fullness" has come forth from *That* Perfect Fullness. When this "perfect fullness" has come forth from that Perfect Fullness, all that remains is the Perfect Fullness.

Find that Perfect Fullness. If you pray, pray for the sake of others to benefit rather than for yourself. Then pray not so much for the things or the events that you imagine, but pray for the Realization of *That*, the Supreme itself. That will turn your turn you toward meditation. When the meditation reaches a stage of comprehending that the Supreme is to be found within, then Self-Inquiry commences. When Self-Inquiry commences you begin to see Consciousness as it is.



### Reality 147

When spiritually aspiring we choose to become that *One*. In Reality such is always the case. But on the level of deeds, actions, & how you conduct your Life, you have a choice. Everyone does. There is no point in saying that so-&-so made you do this, such & such made you do that, or conditions made you do it. Everyone has a choice to make decisions. While you do not determine the Reality, you determine how you will use your Body & Mind. Most importantly, you determine your Happiness & Suffering. You do not do so by saying that today you will be happy & tomorrow you will suffer. But by the way you use your Mind & the way you conduct yourself, Happiness or Suffering may result.

Now you may say: "*This is somewhat like when we see a mountain. From the distance it looks green. The closer we get, the more the green becomes brown, & then there are lines. We get closer, & then there is a tree that is different from other trees. We get closer still, & we see rocks on the mountain & flowers, & deer jumping. We go closer to the deer & inspect the deer through instruments & then we see atoms & things moving. So all this is a whole reality.*" But I say you still did not get close enough. You only went down to the atoms. What happens if you get closer still ?

In any case all that disappears for you the moment that you fall asleep. So how real can it be ? You may say: "it has some reality because I wake up in the morning & it is still there ?"

"Such is the long-standing tendency", Ramana Maharshi used to say. When instruction is given about looking beyond events, activities, & objects, or about what is used to determine Reality, then such statements as: "nothing is happening" seem initially, to be apparently mysterious. They have to be understood in a deep, spiritual sense. If we look for confirmation of the things on the merely sensory level, using our Senses to determine Reality, things will not be readily understandable. One needs to take a closer look

Speculation is not worth anything. The thing to do is to go within and abide free from the Ego. Then you can see what is what.

Ramana Maharshi says that the real nature of things is *Silence*, which is to say that in which no "I" arises, meaning no false sense of Individuality, no Ego arising. If no Ego arises, nothing that would come after the Ego, or would be produced by the Ego, such as any idea of "this", anything objective, no such would arise. *Silence* therefore is something *Unborn, Uncreated, Eternal, Indivisible*, of the nature of homogeneous, or undifferentiated Existence-Consciousness-Bliss.

No one can say when the *Silence* begins, because in the *Silence* itself, there is no one there to say anything. Nor does the *Silence* ever end; nor is the *Silence* ever interrupted, because the *Silence* is Indivisible.



Reality 148



The purpose of spiritual instruction is direct experience. By "direct experience" is meant Self-Realization, which consists of Self-Knowledge. We can have direct experience, enduring experience of the highest Truth, which is that which is expounded in *Silence* & in spoken instruction. Everything of which Ramana Maharshi spoke, & which countless other Sages have expressed, as preserved in Scriptures (*though some of it has disappeared in the mists of time*) can be experienced by oneself. The purpose of spiritual instruction is to enable us to have that direct experience.

How do we get spiritual experience ? It is a matter of knowing the Self. If we want the experience of Self-Realization, if we want Self-Knowledge, if we want Liberation from all the imagine Bondage, they want to have the direct experience of the Eternal, of the Infinite, of everything that is praised in the Scriptures as *Brahman*, God, & such, all we need to do is Self-Inquiry. All of the instruction is to point us in the right direction, to coax is to Self-Inquiry, to turn the Mind from an outer, an *objective* way of looking, which is actually a deluded way looking, to an inner or truthful way of looking, a way that is non-*objective*.

The Self, as the *Silence*, as real Existence, is always present. The Self is never lacking in the least degree. The Self undergoes no phases or modifications, the Self is the Absolute. The Self does not vary, *changelessness* is its very nature. If the Self is Infinite, Eternal, & the one Reality, how is it that a person does not experience it ? This is just because the person thinks of himself as a "person", as some thing. If the mis-identification that goes with that notion of a separate Individuality is relinquished or destroyed, by any means, that which is always Real, stands self-revealed. That Self is Bliss, the Self is great Happiness & Peace, which seems concealed,. But then it sends out a self-evident. We then recover what is not actually lost, but simply seemed to be veiled.

If you want to be beyond mis-identifications and thus destroy that *veil*, what more direct means could there be than simple Self-Inquiry within yourself to find out "Who am I ?" This is the consistent instruction of Ramana Maharshi, concerning what the Self is, finding out "Who am I ?" The Realization of Truth is not a difficult thing. It requires all one's effort, but does is not mean there is difficulty involved.

Selfinquiry is something very simple. In its simplicity lies its profundity. Self-Realization itself is not something complex. Self-Realization is something supremely simple, so simple that what is necessary is to relinquish whatever idea you have in Mind, to let that simplicity which is in the background so speak, shine forth.

What is meant by the background ? What is meant is your real Being. You know it when you do not think of it in a particular way. Your real Being is your own Consciousness, & you know it when you are not all consumed in its content. Consciousness is your own natural Bliss, & you know it when you are not busy chasing it elsewhere.

We have to understand that the Bliss we seek is within, & then we can proceed directly to it. Consciousness is always shining, so that there is knowledge about things sensed & things conceived. Consciousness lights up the Perceptions & the Conceptions, & every thought. The most obvious thing is what is doing all this knowing. It is Consciousness which is consistently present, unlike any particular thought or content of the Mind. Yet Consciousness goes unnoticed. So notice Consciousness & find out how Real it is, & find it to be who you are.



### Reality 149

In Self-Inquiry to know ourselves, the mistake about Happiness is corrected, so we can say that the sense of Happiness is returned to its rightful place. When Happiness is thus returned to its rightful place, our Innate Bliss is shining. In this Self-Inquiry to know the Self, the sense of Reality is returned to its rightful place, so that one no longer takes the unreal to be Real, and one no longer overlooks the Real & thinks that it is unreal. In Self-Inquiry to know the Self, are very sense of Identity returns to its rightful place, so that we no longer confound ourselves with things that we are not.

To put it simply if we do not know the Self, & confound the Self with something we are not, we will feel bound, & when we are bound, we suffer. Bondage runs contrary to our True Nature, no one is ever content with Suffering.

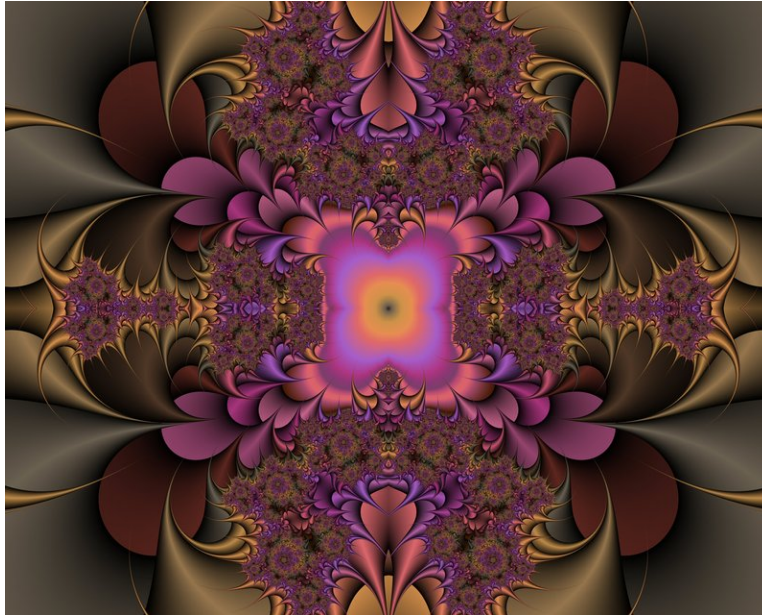
As soon as they are Suffering, there is a move toward Happiness. Let that move be inward, & unbind oneself. When we take off the fetters of Bondage, we will find that they are not real fetters. One is bound without a rope. A *Rope* seem to be like a *Snake* in the darkness represents the not-knowing of Reality & the imagining of Illusion. Remove Illusion & we will no longer be "bitten" by a snake that does not exist/ We will see the *Rope* that has been there the entire time.

With Self-Inquiry, we will know that we are on the right course by the increasing sense of Happiness. It may be felt as Peace, or as Joy. It is because that Bliss, or understanding of it, is being returned to its rightful place in Knowledge. There will be a clearing up of the confusion of what is Real, & what is not Real, so that which might at first seem abstracted, that is the highest Truth, will be vivid as a matter of direct experience. Things that before seem "concrete" will be known to be no better than non-existent images of last night's Dream. With Self-Inquiry, we clear up the confusion regarding who we are, & by direct experience, we no longer limit our Identity. We no longer bind ourselves.

As to what is this Formless, Undefined Self in itself ? Silence is most eloquent. If, in the Silence, we are thinking of something, question within oneself: "What am I thinking & why ? And who is aware of the thoughts ?"

If we are concerned with what that which appears through our Senses, question & find out if we are the Body. If not what are you? Transcendent over what is objective: the Body, the Senses, the Mind, & without trace of Ego, the Reality of the Self always exists.

Self-Inquiry is to be practiced deeply, even constantly, "Who am I ?" Find out who you are. The Darkness of Ignorance cannot withstand the Light of inquiring Knowledge. Use the Light with which we are already endowed. Turn it inward, & just as there is "no darkness before light", everywhere you look, Ignorance will vanish, & Reality will be self-evident.



### Reality 150

Every time there is a reduction or dissolution of the Ego, spiritual experience dawns, without even a moment's delay. There is no postponement. When we see some time lapsing in the course of a deeper spiritual experience developing, it simply means that the aspirant is taking some more time to dissolve that aspect of the Ego, some more time to dissolve the Delusion of being bound.

Search within your Mind to see where you can dissolve, where you can destroy, some aspect of the Ego. Turning your Mind and would, melting it in Truth, or Love, you find a spiritual experience dawning & you find Bondage disappearing. What you hope to experience, the Absolute is always present. You do not need to wait for Truth to be.

It is never recommended to have "waiting" as a practice. With your own self effort, you simply have to actively destroy whatever seems to be obscuring your spiritual experience. That which will be destroyed will only be Illusion. Nothing Real can be obscuring the Truth.

It is Knowledge that makes it work. When a person engages in some spiritual activity, there are some spark, to a lesser or greater degree of Knowledge, of real Wisdom. That is what makes it work to whatever degree it works. The greater degree of Self-Knowledge, the greater is the success of the particular spiritual practice of meditation. So the emphasis is always placed upon Self-Knowledge.

Shankara says: "Knowledge alone is Liberation. Action does not lead to Liberation." Those lines of his are rather well-known, & they have been repeated for more than 12 centuries because wise people find the same results. Action does not lead to Liberation, Knowledge alone is Liberation. What does this

mean ? It means that one does not succeed with his Body, engaging his Senses, & does not thus reveal the Reality.

The Self is not the Body. In order to see Reality, or Truth just as it is, one must relinquish the idea that his Senses show him what is true. As long as one regard the Senses of that as the determination of reality, the best one can hope for is a bound, material- oriented experience.

That is not God. No one expect to see God, or *Brahman* through his or her Senses. It is not the Self. How could you see yourself with your eyes or ears ? How could you see Consciousness in this way ? How could you see Truth in this way ? It will not happen. You must be off the level of the Senses & the Body to see your real Identity.

Action does not lead to Liberation, because the actions of the Senses & the Body will not in themselves bring Liberation about. Yet the seeker definitely seems to become spiritually benefited by the spiritual activities in which engages. The action is endowed with a loss, or dissolution of Ego, such as one someone takes a selfless action & serves some higher purpose in a selfless way. If he does that, he feels better & his Mind is clear. His experience is more expansive. How can this be so ? It is not the specific action that is responsible, but in the midst of that action, there it was Knowledge looming. So we do not necessarily abandon the action, but rather we abandon the mis-identification with action, & focus on the Knowledge itself. That is why is recommended that you act in a selfless way, but have full Knowledge of how selfless you can be – in other words, Egoless.

"Action does not lead to Liberation" can also refer to the activities of the Mind, meaning that Self-Realization or Liberation is not something produced by thinking. This is not mean that we should not think about spiritual matters, including the Teaching. Obviously we think about it & contemplate it. However contemplation should lead to Meditation. Thinking should be jumping off point into that which is beyond thought. What is beyond thought is the inner Consciousness, one's Real Being.





## Reality 151

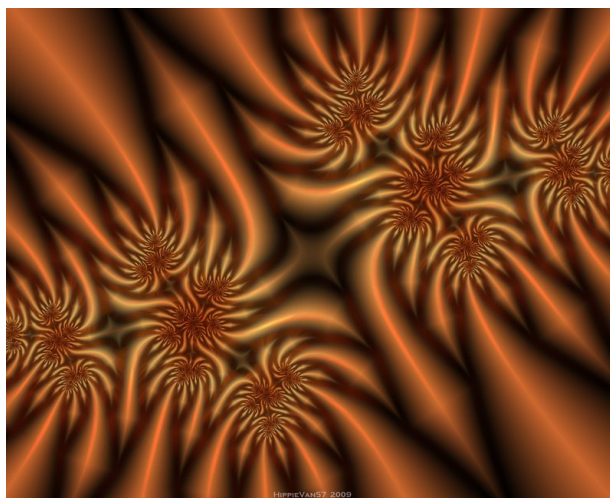
You know that you exist right now. If you close your eyes, the Existence is not increase. You are just the Existence itself. Your Mind may be accustomed to be more focused upon it with your eyes closed, such as in Meditation. Existence itself though does not decrease because you have now opened your eyes. The Existence is still the same. Close your eyes. You know that you have just closed your eyes. You know the thoughts coursing through your Mind. That Consciousness which is the silent Witness of all this knows just same if you now open your eyes. It knows the eyes are open. It even knows the diminishing of the focus on what is inner in such a case.

Self-Inquiry starts at a level at which we concentrate our Minds & ask ourselves: "Who am I ?" It starts with an inner focus but it does not & there. There is nothing intrinsically powerful in the small, one-inch patches of flash, called the Eyelids such that when they open & close Reality turns on & off.

Self-Inquiry starts when we concentrate our Minds & ask ourselves: "Who am I ?" Self-Inquiry starts with an inward focus, but does not end there. There is nothing intrinsically powerful with inward focus nor is it true that when the Eyes opened suddenly the Self becomes scared & runs away. What actually diminishes the experience at that time ? Look closely. Is not so much activation of your Senses that diminishes experience. If your Eyes are closed, but you imagine a whole other scene before you, you can become caught up in that scene anyway. That is day-dreaming.

When you day-dream, you know that you have lost track of your focus including in meditation. When you are day-dream about something, your Mind apparently splits the Self between the subject & an object. Then you take up in a Body position acting through the Senses in the Dream. They are Dream Senses. They are of the Dream Body.

Yet the same kind of thing happens in the Waking state when you have your Eyes open, when you are not day-dreaming. But you are then in an external mentality. There is the same split between subject & object, the same mistaking yourself to be encapsulated in the Body, operating through the Senses, as if you were the locus point where the Senses meet. That is not really the Truth. You know that when you go within & begin Self-Inquiry, the experience of the Self is more Formless.



## Reality 152

Ignorance is composed of various tendencies, which are habits of Delusion. By such habits of Delusion, you take up the same stand as you did before. Only now you know better, so some of the experience goes with you. It leaves an indelible mark on the Mind, and it goes with you. You cannot forget it. You are never the same. Every time you proceed deeper in Meditation, every time you make Self-Inquiry, you are never the same. Sometimes, this is something subtle, & sometimes it is very dramatic. In either case you are never the same. The more you experience the Infinite, the less you fit in the finite. You do not return to the experience of the finite as you did before.

Now you may want to prolong the experience. Existence & Consciousness of the core of the experience. That is still there. It does not diminish. Something else comes into play. What is it ? It is the notion of "I"; "I am the Body"; "The World is external to me." If you become more cut up, you think that your Happiness lies externally, & there is Attachment. Once there is Attachment, they will be desire or aversion, frustration when the desires are not met, & then more Ignorance. The vicious cycle of ignorance, craving, & hatred going around & around characterizes *samsara*, the repetitive cycle of Birth, Illusion, & Death.

How do we get to the Reality, which is continuous so is to have it be constant in our experience ? See the ways in which you take yourself out of the spiritual experience of the Self. "Go back to where you came", as Ramana Maharshi said. Of course, he did not mean to go out the door by which you entered into the into the Meditation Hall. It meant to go back to where you came in a spiritual sense. How did you come forth into apparent relative existence ?

Ramana pointed out that the same thing happens in the changing of States from Deep Dreamless Sleep to the Waking State. We exist in Deep Dreamless Sleep just as we exist now. Only in Deep Dreamless Sleep we are at Peace, & we have not a single idea about ourselves. There is no thought process. There is then no Sense activity, no World conceived, no Memory, no Personality, no Body identification, nothing of the sort, yet you exist just fine. The same Existence is now also, but something has been superimposed on it or artificially added to it. Examine what has been artificially added to your identity & abandon it. As soon as you do that, the spiritual experience continues or returns to you.



### Reality 153

As regards the so-called subject of "fear" in Meditation & going deep within, please know this. You know from your own experience, that being in the Illusion is a fearful state; & being out of the Illusion is the fearless state. That is, you experience fear only from the illusory point of view & never other than from the illusory point of view. Seekers may experience fear *before* they take this a step in the right direction, not *when* they take it the step. So the fear is only from the perspective of Illusion. The Illusion itself generates a fear. The reality has no fear.

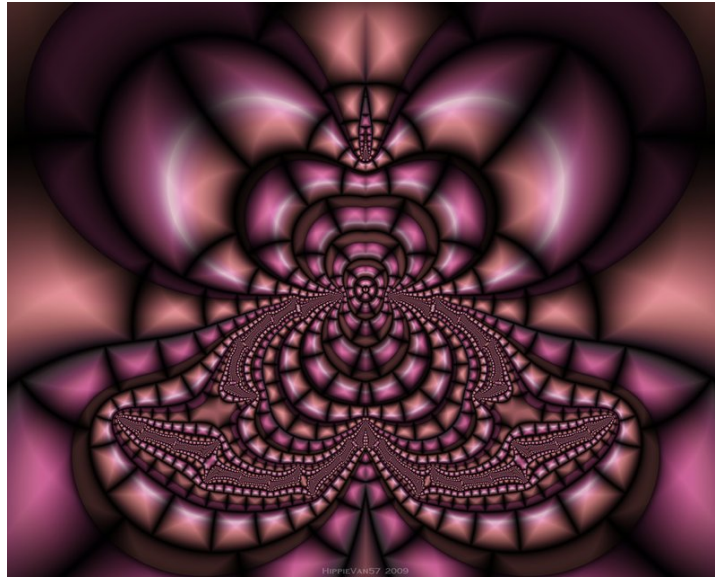
The Upanishads say that when there is *1-without-a-2<sup>nd</sup>*, there is no fear. When there is a *2<sup>nd</sup>*, there is fear. A *2<sup>nd</sup>* means of duality. It refers to the notion "I" & everything appended to it, a Duality between yourself & the Self. Where that "I", or your local self, disappears there you are fearless. You touch in to this every time you dive within. You do not have fear then.

Your experience corroborates what reason tells you, what the Sages tell you, & what ancient Scriptures tell you. You know that you are on the right track when these for intersect: (1) the timeless Teachings ancient past; (2) the detailed Instruction of more recent Sages; (3) your own Experience, & your best Reasoning or deepest Self-Inquiry.

You know that you experience the fear only within the Illusion. So if you do anything to dissolve the Illusion, you will have your refuge, your sanctuary, & your freedom from fear. The more you build up that notion of an Ego, the more fear there will be. The more you destroy the notion of an Ego, the less fear there is.

Attachments & their consequent fear are all in the Mind. Proceed by your own experience, & by what the Wise Sages tell you. There is nothing fearful about going within. There is no such thing as fear of the unknown. You have fear only of what you think you know. When you say that you are afraid of letting go of the Illusion, because you do not know what will be there, naturally you have a very definite *idea* of what think will be there. If you lost that *idea*, you would not be afraid.

We do not become afraid of something we do not know, simply because we do not know it in order to be afraid of it. The fear of destroying Illusion contains a very definite *idea*. If you relinquish that *idea*, you can proceed smoothly.



### Reality 154

Sages for thousands of years, spread around the world, declared Truth & showed the way to it. They have certainly not done so just to scare us. Experience of the Truth & the Bliss of it are obviously something far more profound.

You can increase the frequency & opportunities for spiritual experience in a number of ways. Regular spiritual Meditation is one. When you are receiving Instruction, you can enter the experience. You can listen to Instruction, take his message with you & meditate upon it later. Or else you can also have experience while listening to Instruction. If you listen only for later, & not for the moment it occurs, the Sage could tell you later. But Instruction is also for the moment that the Instruction occurs. You may have the experience then.

You can enhance the opportunities for practice of *shravana* or "listening"; *manana* or "reflection"; *nididhyasana*, or deep Meditation; & *samadhi* or absorption. sure The *shravana* is "listening". Really "listening" is defined as listening in which you empty out the rest of Mind & really listen.

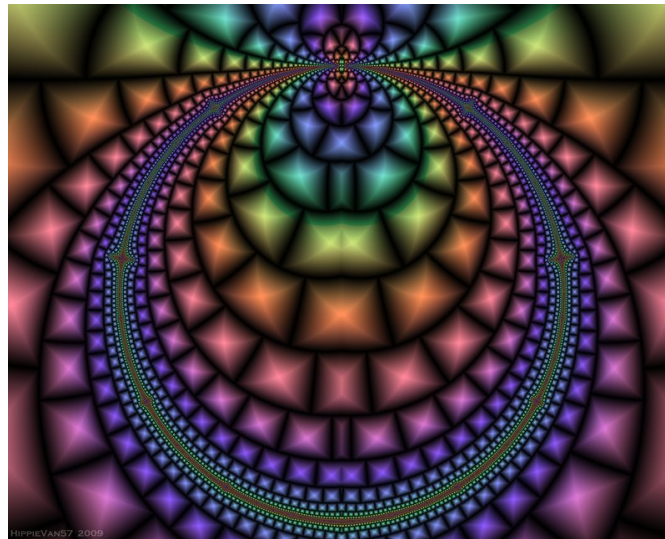
Then *manana* or is "reflection". You keep on thinking about the Teaching, letting it course through your Mind. Consider how much time is used thinking about other things. Give your Mind to thinking about Teaching, & the thinking will tend to act like a "springboard" setting you up for better Meditation experiences.

Deeply meditate on the teaching. The more you meditate, the deeper & stronger Meditation becomes, & the more power there is in your Meditation. This is the power to discern Reality & to get to the real Background. Know that the availability of being absorbed. Know that you can realize the Truth. Have a strong *conviction* that you can realize truth.



More experiences tend to give birth to even more experiences. The traditional practices will help. These are the development of Discrimination between the real & the unreal, between the Self & the non-Self; the development of Detachment; the development of Equanimity & or Tranquility; Self-control; Renunciation; Fortitude & Perseverance; Faith or deep Conviction; consecrated deep profound Meditation; & of course the arising of Desire for Liberation.

The brighter burns the desire for Liberation, the more intense the Meditation, & consequently the more frequent & deeper the inner experience is.



### Reality 155

The seeker tends to conceive that Self-Realization is an event & is striving toward the "goal". That is all right, but upon Self-Realization you find that there is no "when" to it. Self-Realization is not an event. It does not happen to "someone", but is just the *abiding* Reality.

Self-Realization is just Being, not being this or that & not *becoming* "this" or "that". Self-Realization is just Being, Existence. Self-Realization does not mean "*a being*". Self-Realization does not mean *being something*, as if it were an Action. Self-Realization is without the concept of "I am going to be this," or "I am going to be that." Self-Realization most certainly does not mean the Body, Personality, etc. Self-Realization means pure *Being* or Existence itself. Self-Realization is the *substance* of Enlightenment.

Given that all is One of that already exists, the purpose of Self-Inquiry is to find out how everything is One to such an extent that there is only One & not even "everything" – not as if there were many things in One, but just one Existence. This is plenty to find out. If one's experience ever seems to be contrary, one to find out what the truth is.

If one's experience is already just *That*, without deviation, without the possibility of Suffering in Life or in Death, without any trace of Bondage or the potential to be bound, there is no need to inquire "Who am I ?" Even Ramana Maharshi himself has said so. There is then no need for such Self-Inquiry, even though he taught Self-Inquiry for more than 50 years for everyone whose experience was not that Absolute, final, conclusive Self-Realization.

If Ignorance is not knowing who you are, then inquiring "Who am I ?" will destroy that Ignorance. If what you need, to know Reality, is Self-Realization, or Self-Knowledge, what could be more direct, more immediate, then inquiring to know who you are ? In contrast, any other spiritual practice, or even a state of not doing any practice, which involve something that is "mediate", that is to say something that is "in between" – your thoughts, your Senses, the Body, some worldly object, & such. "Who am I ?" deals directly with your own Consciousness, upstream of even thought, so it is in "immediate".



### Reality 156

Returning the Mind to the place whose origin is said to be the spiritual practice. When you recognize that a thought is a thought, a concept of the concept, & no longer call these things yourself, & no longer regard them as Reality, or is having anything to do with Reality, that is the practice of returning the Mind to its origin. What causes all his ideas ? Conjure some up ? Make a thorough Self-Inquiry to find out what the you is.

Those ideas that tend to plague you have roots. There based on certain miss-identifications such as thinking of yourself as a Body, is a particular person, or as the the Mind. All those ideas, the root of the roots will be found to be the notion "I". Become accustomed to not only observing them all, but also a deeper Self-Inquiry. When you observe them they seem to subside, but trace them back inward. Get to the root, & pull out the root, you need to pull it out by the root. Because you have some growing in the backyard of your Mind, you need to pull it out by the root. If you simply mow it down you only get some temporary relief.

But that relief is only temporary, for a while. When you engage in Meditation, that only observes it, such as like mowing it down. You get some relief for a while, but it tends to start up again, if not in the same place, then in some other place. That is, if not the same thoughts, then some other thoughts rooted in the same mi-identification rise up. Pull out the root. See what the ideas are, find out what the basic identities are, & then go into the make of this thinking. Then find out: "Who has these Ideas ?"

If we see an Idea as an Idea, we then trace out what is real, who we are, & then the Idea that has arisen subsides. If the same Idea arises again, you have not inquired deeply enough. As you are aspiring, some tendencies are cut off at once, & some tendencies seem to we turn again & again until you get to the root. If that is the case, it is only a call for deeper Meditation & Self-Inquiry.

If the Mind keeps thinking about the Teachings that is providing its own fuel for Meditation, so that is worthwhile. To be continually thinking about the Teaching is perfectly fine. At the very minimum, this sets up something in the Mind itself that is contrary to the content that is of ignorance. If it was ignorant content, you are now setting up wise content.

The wise content points to something beyond the content of the Mind entirely. The wise content is reflections or expressions of the Truth, though not the Truth itself. However, these reflections or those expressions of Truth are setting up a direction in your Mind that runs contrary to outwardly projecting Delusion – that of which Suffering is made. So it is beneficial. If you cannot think about you can think of the Truth too much, & you already know that Instruction in Truth beyond thought.

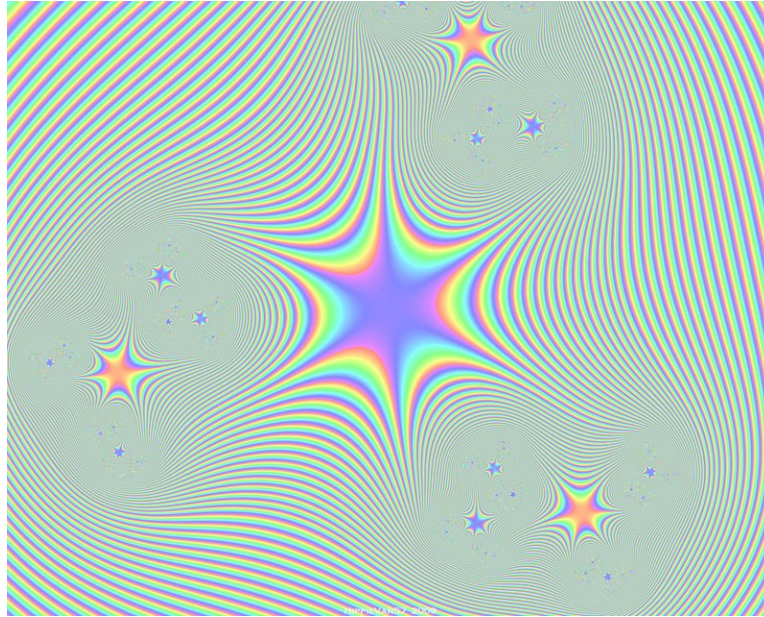
Let's say that the same Truth, which is beyond thought is told to 2 people. One person says: "The Truth is beyond thought," so what do you think the results would be ? With their states we different ? Why should I a bother to think about it ?

The other person hears: "The Truth is beyond thought" & begins to think about it day & night, contemplating: "How can this be ?" "How can I realize it ?" As in the Upanishads, let us say we meet 2 of them after 12 years. What do you think the results would be? Will their states be different?

Yes compare the 2 states. One person start thinking about it, & just cannot let it out of his or her Mind. The other person says: "I do not have to think about it because it has already been said that the Truth is beyond thought, so I do not think about it all."

And then all depends on something deeper. Thus there is all spirituality. Even though Truth is beyond "sacred" & "spiritual", there is the availability & helpfulness of what is spiritual to let people out of the worldliness. That is nothing more than getting caught up in a little corner of the Mind.

Illusion is added on top of something so *pristine*. That which is the seen actually has not vanished. It is the same. Only it appears to become covered. The covering is not made out of anything. It is an Illusion. It has no valid cause. The Self is still he hit there & will remain there. When it occurs to him or her to turn the Mind within, to find out within him or herself, "Who am I ?" then something that was learned will be unlearned, & real knowledge will be there. That is the hope, that is a promise, that is the Path. that is the end in itself.



### Reality 157

The nature of Reality is simple Being, silent Existence. It is that profound *Silence* which Ramana Maharshi has described as "*That* in which no 'I' arises." Reality is pure Existence, & there is no one who is apart from it; nor is there any Individuality in it, for it is homogeneous, free from many different it differentiation, & forever indivisible.

Existence itself has no Beginning & no End, no Birth & no Death. Nothing creates it, nor does it create anything else. Existence is Non-Dual, which means that it is *That* which alone is. *That* is the Reality, Being, the very nature of Existence, & it is to be realized as "I" – the "I" within you.

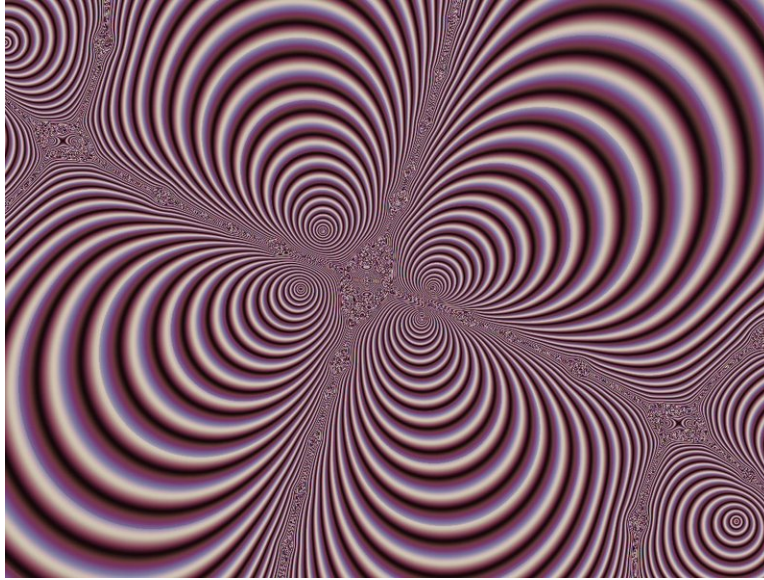
If we conceive of ourselves in limited or bound terms, such is Ignorance, & Knowledge of the Self puts an end to Ignorance. If we have Ignorance, we appear limited or bound. Knowledge of the self is therefore called "Liberation" because it destroys the Illusion of Bondage. If we conceive of ourselves in Ignorance & hence bound, we suffer which is the overshadowing or *veiling* of the Happiness that is Innate. If we have Self-Knowledge, there is no such *veiling* in the Bliss that was thought to be lost has been recovered.

The nature of Ignorance is imagination, an idea with no substance, & it is like a Dream. Ramana Maharshi has often pointed out that it starts with a single point called "I" & to that "I" can be appended any number of definitions. Remove the false sense of "I" to see what "I" really is, the real Identity. Then you find that all that is described in the Non-Dual texts & Scriptures are statements about your own Being, your very Existence. They are statements of self-evident experience, & that experience can be yours. Indeed the experience of *That* is your Natural State.

To establish yourself in that Non-Dual, direct experience, to abide in the Knowledge of the Self, make a profound, penetrating Self-Inquiry to see what the nature of your Being is. Start with that which is simplest, because Being is simple. By "simple" is meant: without complexity, without division, & without parts.



Start with something so simple that you can hardly think of it, because when we want to and is in that which is Transcendent of all sensation & conception. Where we end is where we should start. In Non-Duality, we can do so. If your aim is Self-Knowledge, you can do so. What is so simple is your own Existence. The very fact of your Existence, that you are, is the place to begin & end.



### Reality 158

That you exist is a self-evident fact. You exist, & you know that you exist. You know that you exist even without thinking, "I exist." If you would ask the question of yourself, "Do I exist ?", you are of course existing in order to put the question to yourself. It is taken for granted. The Existence of which you are sure with the deepest conviction, even without thinking about it & without holding up a mirror to see if you are really there – this is where you can start. You start by inquiring to see what actually is that Existence. Discern.

Knowledge of the Self can be spoken of as Realization & as a Path, or practice. In Non-Duality, Path or practice is of the same Nature as the end result. This is why it works. To say of the same Nature, there is no *gap* to cross. You start with your own Existence. In practice, you discern what actually is your Being & what has only been imagined, for no valid reason, to be your Identity. The whole Path is one of establishing your Identity where it really is, where it ought to be, as of the Self. This is not as of a limited form, such as the Body, with Birth & Death, Creation & Destruction, & not as a limited form such as any amount of thought. Beyond Perception, beyond Conception, interior, where the "I" truly is – this is where we want to look.

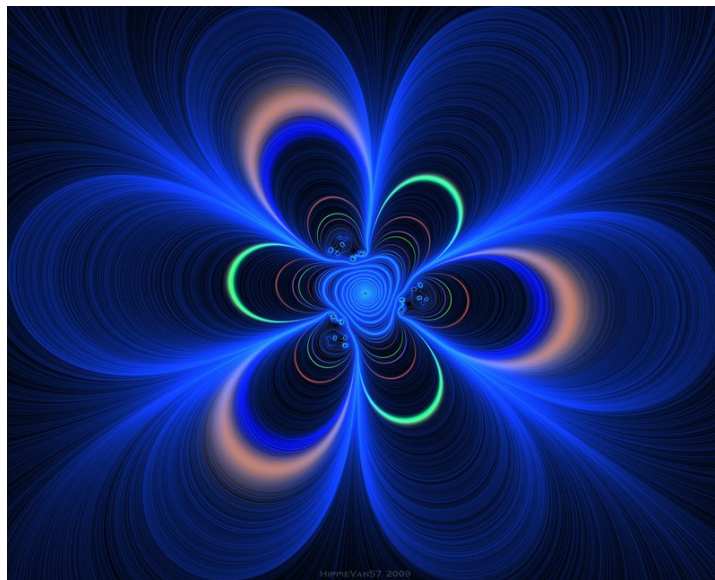
In verses 9 & 10 of the *Supplement to Truth Revealed, Sat Vidya*, which is a supplement to the Tamil version of *40 verses on Reality*, Ramana Maharshi says: "Know that the pure & changeless Self-Awareness in the Heart is the knowledge which, through destruction of the Ego, bestows Liberation. The Body is *inert* like an *earthen pot*. Since it has no "I"-consciousness, & since in the state of Deep Dreamless Sleep, when bodiless, we do not experience our Natural Being, the Body cannot be the "I". Who then is it that causes "I"-ness? Whence is he ? In the heart of those who thus inquire, know & *abide* as the Self, the Lord shines forth of Himself as "That I am" Consciousness.

For Self-Realization, or Realization of the Absolute, what is needed is Self-Knowledge, which is what constitutes its Realization. For Realization, there must be Liberation from Bondage. If there is Bondage, there is Liberation. When yours is Liberation, it is just called the Natural State from which one can say, "There is no Bondage & no Liberation." What is this Liberation or Self-Knowledge ? It is *abiding* clearly beyond the Ego sense, beyond the notion of a separate Individual, & every form that is appended to it, such as the Body which, which Ramana Maharshi compares to an *earthen pot*.

The Body is not your Existence. The Body is an objective, transitory form that is not different from the Body you had in last night's Dream. Think of yourself as the Body, as encapsulated in it, or is bound to it, & you suffer needlessly. Liberate yourself from that needless Bondage by thoroughly inquiring to find out who you are.

You come to the Realization that you are not a Body & that what pertains to a Body does not pertain to you. The limitations of the Body are not your limitations. Ramana Maharshi points out that our own Natural Being is there in Deep Dreamless Sleep. What exists in Deep Dreamless Sleep also exist now. But what does exist in Deep Dreamless Sleep ?

In your experience, there is no Body, no thought, nothing that depends on thought, that is everything of an objective character, from the subtlest abstract idea to formed perception. None of it is there in your experience, but your Existence. It is the same then & now. The only difference is everything that has been added since the waking. What is newly appeared are the various thoughts. Within us thoughts or States of Mind appear the various forms.



### Reality 159

If you are Dreaming, in the Dreaming state of mind, there is a Dream body, a Dream World, Dream forms, & the Dream relating between those forms. If it is a particular Dream called the "Waking State", you have the Waking State Body, Waking State World, & the Waking State knowledge in relation to other things. Your Existence is the same though even, even now in the midst of the Waking State as it is in Deep Dreamless Sleep.

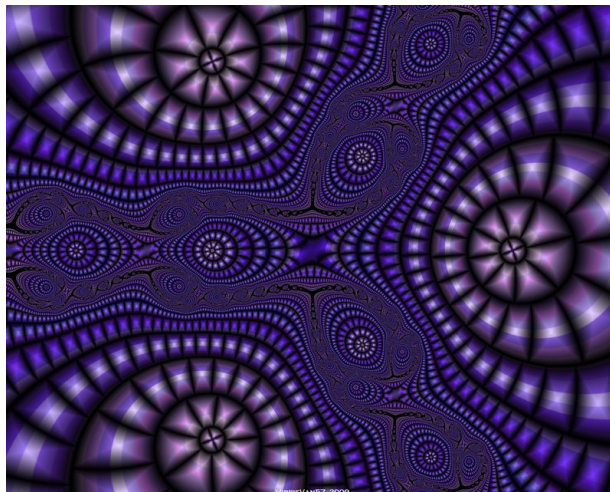
Your existence & was free of thought, without mis-identification, without form, & very much at Peace. That same formless, all-peaceful Existence is now what you are. Nothing has changed in your Existence, or being. Unchanging is your very Nature. If this is not evident to you, Self-Inquiry within yourself who am will distinguish your actual being from what are merely forms of thoughts, inclusive of the objects that are perceived in whatever state of mind (Waking or Dream) you appear to be in.

The Self itself has no "in" & "out", Before & After, Now & Then, Up & Down, Light & Darkness, Knowledge & Ignorance, Bondage & Liberation. The Self is simply as it is. What is being described as your own Nature. Existence is that which just is as it is, undergoing no conditions & no changes State. Experientially you understand yourself to be *That*. You have *heard* (*shravana*) it. *Reflect* (*manana*) on it. *Meditate* (*nididhyasana*) on it deeply, & arrive at the State of Knowledge. In that state of Knowledge, you know that you are not apart from the Absolute Self, & *It* is not apart from you. You are not something broken off from *It* that needs to return to *It*. If it seems as if the Absolute is at a distance, however slight or great that distance is, find out the "I". Follow Ramana Maharshi's instruction to inquire "Who am I ?"

In many spiritual texts & in the Instruction of many Sages, the *objectivity* associated with Self-Realization, God, or *Brahman* is negated so that you will know it in a non-objective fashion. This is extensively explained in the *Ribhu Gita*. To realize this as your own knowledge, eliminate *where* you think you stand. Do you stand as a Body? That will make for a big distance between you & the Absolute.

If you mistake yourself to be a Body, there will be you as an Individual, the Absolute, & the World, & all these will appear to be differentiated. That is Duality. If you eliminate where you stand, that is the I am the Body idea, by it Self-Inquiry as Ramana Maharshi says, looking into your Being, into the very core of you, all that differentiation vanishes.

If you take up us stand in thought, the Absolute will seem at a distance. It will seem to be in a different Mental State. So long as there is that, you strive for the Enlightened State. However if you are striving for the Enlightened State, the most direct approach is to eliminate the un-enlightened state. If you are striving for the Realization of *Brahman* – the vast Absolute – eliminate the minute Individuality. If you are striving for state that transcends your present thought, dis-identify, or destroy your present thought. Such is the spiritual practice.



## Reality 160

The sense of Identity, the sense of Reality, & that sense of Happiness should return to their Source. All 3 of those are accomplished when you inquire: "Who am I ?" Start with the basic Existence. You know that you exist. Trace it inward. Dis-identify from the Body, from the Senses, from the Mind, from anything that seems to have form or objectivity, & from even the notion of "I", which is a vacuous, imaginary beginning of all the *trouble*. Self-Inquiry is to be practiced & you will find that the *trouble* never actually happened, that the Bondage did not come to be, & that the *samsara* – repetitive cycle of Birth, Death, & Illusion – has no existence. You do Self-Inquiry to see what the Ego is, & you will find nothing there is an Individual. Something is there, but it is not an Ego. There is nothing of an Ego. You find Non-Dual Being alone to be, & *That* alone has been the case for the entire time.

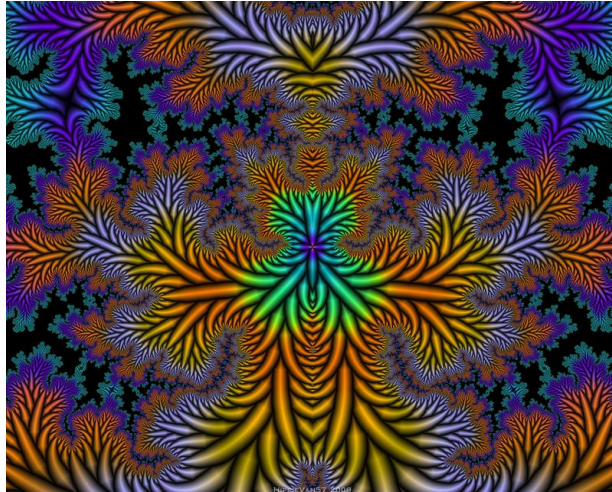
What is perceived as Wisdom is, in substance, the True Being, the Real Consciousness. What is mis-perceived as Ignorance is also the same True Being, or Consciousness, because there is no 2<sup>nd</sup> thing that ever comes to be. However, if we go into it in depth, not theoretically, but rather as a matter of our experience, we realize that there is *nothing arising* at any time.

Ramana Maharshi has said, if the Ego is, all else *is*. If the Ego is not, all else *is not*. Based upon the notion of an Ego comes every theory, spiritual & atheistic, about "arising", manifesting, etc. Theories are like those that are invented to describe the happenings in a Dream, or the theories devised to explain the presence of *fish* in a Mirage. There is no water, let alone *fish*.

Teachings such as "this arises from the Source" are expedient teachings. They are not final Non-Dual Truth. They are intended just to push the seeker from the *objectified* outlook to the more *subjective* way of viewing. They are intended to draw attention to the Source. When we inquire into that Source, the true being, we find that there is no division in it. Nothing comes out of it. Nothing occurs within it. It is space-like, still, & silent.

If your experience seems to have something "arising", such as thought or the World appearance, commence a Self-Inquiry "*For whom does it arise ?*" & from there inquire "Who am I ?" When you inquire "*For whom does it arise ?*" the sense of Reality & Identity should return to the "I". The manifestation, such as the World, does not proclaim itself to be. Any sense of Reality given to it – even to the extent of saying, "it appears" – comes from you. Find out what that "you" is.





### Reality 161

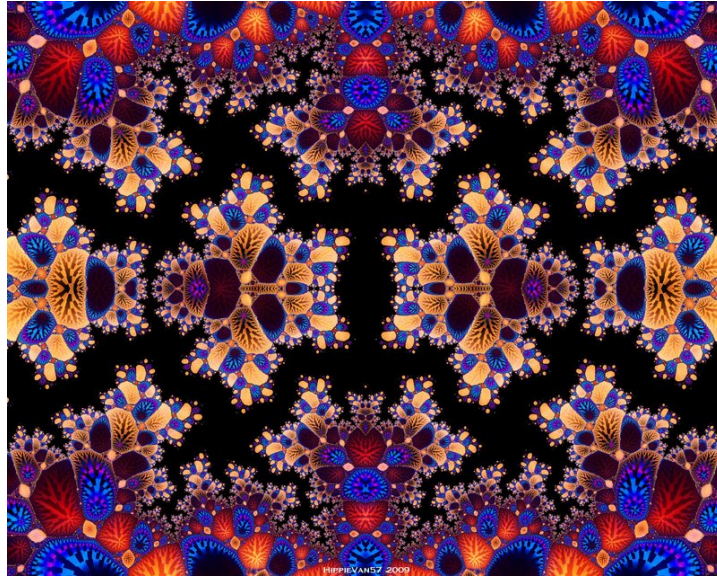
Knowledge is always direct experience. Any so-called door-way into it is made of Space, marked off by the door-frame. The frame is like the words & thoughts that we used to express the Truth. The actual "entry" is the same thing as where we want to go, which is the Space. Again the "door-way" is the "I". Going to the "door-way", it looks as if it is an individualized Space. But when you strip away the mis-identifications, the limiting adjuncts, you will find that it is not individualized at all. It is like a limitless Space. It is the limitless Space of Pure Consciousness. Be drowned in that *Ocean* of Existence-Consciousness-Bliss.

No one has ever had too strong a Desire for Liberation. The thirst Liberation is one of the best assets any seeker of Self-Realization could have. So important is it that Sri Shankara said that of all the "Requisites for Realization", that was the most essential.

"Seek & you will find." No one ever sought too hard, yet one can meet people who have sought in ways that are not fruitful, such as in worldliness or who did not seek intensely enough. Some people could use more Desire for Liberation but there has never been a seeker who had too much Desire for Liberation.

There are slight differences among Non-Dual spiritual approaches. Yet they all revolve around your own essential Existence. The "I" is a common factor. "Whence am I ?" means tracing the sense of "I" to its Source. The Source of "I" cannot be bodily. So we are not looking for a physical location. No can it be subtle. So were not looking for Subtle Body location. The source of "I" cannot be a thought. The thoughts must be for someone. The thoughts are for the "I". So we cannot say thought is the source of "I". Where does the Source of "I" exist, or from "Whence does 'I' spring ?" This is the Self-Inquiry, tracing your Identity, to that fundamental Existence.

"Who am I ?" – put the question to yourself only once unless you lose track of it entirely in meditation. It is not meant that you should repeat the question "Who am I ?" What is indicated in the question is an introspection as to what is "I" ? It is similar to tracing the sense of "I" back to its Origin, to Existence. You start with the sense of "I" – "I exist" – & discern exactly what that is. You arrive at the same conclusion, the same Existence-Consciousness-Bliss which is your Real Nature.



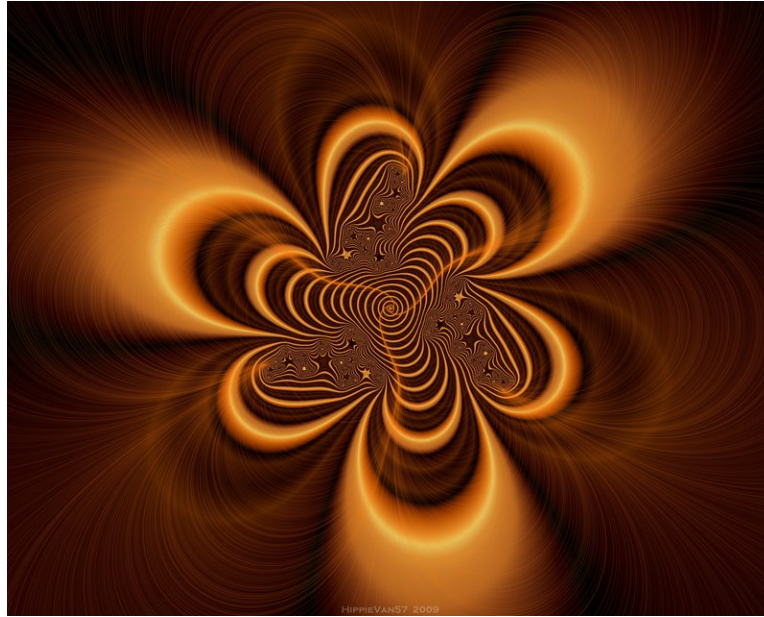
### Reality 162

As for meditation by negation, it is for the purpose of destroying the Illusion. Illusion is that which is not, but one thinks that it is real. One may think it is temporary. One may think it is permanent. Obviously, the permanent case is a more serious disease than a temporary one. In either case, the Negation is the remedy. Why is Negation used ? To destroy all Ignorance is alone sufficient. If Ignorance is destroyed, Knowledge remains, naturally so. So the Superimposition is to be removed, that which is the Substrate, the Background will remain self-evident.

The Reality itself is beyond thought & word. The *Bhagavad-Gita* says, "where words & thoughts turn back, there is My abode." That is your abode. The Negation is it is "not this, not this, not this", (*neti, neti*). There is One Thing that cannot be negated. And no point can your Existence be negated. If you try to do so, you are still there to perform the negation. However, everything else that you can think of can be negated. That which remains is the "I" which is pure Existence that cannot be thought of.

It does not matter if you begin Self-Inquiry with some contemplative mode, & it is Mental. Just do not end there. If you said yourself, "not this not this," go into the meaning of what you are negating. When you read the text, going to the meaning of it to experience it. It is fine if your Intellect agrees with it & your reasoning abilities have been satisfied. Now go into the experience of it & it will not be Mental. Obviously, in negating everything, including the Mind, there is nothing intrinsically Mental.

Ramana Maharshi's Instruction is very profound. It is summed up as: *inquire as to* "Who am I ?" If other thoughts arise, if you feel that you are something other than the Self, inquire: "For whom is this thought ?" Similarly "For whom is this sensation ?" "For whom is this experience ?" The answer will necessarily be: "for me". Then the question is actually "Who am I ?" You will not return to that objective thing, for it is only "for me". You will not you will be looking at the "I" without that objective thing, & seeing it more for what it is.



### Reality 163

The desire for Happiness is ongoing – except in Deep Dreamless Sleep, for then you are not in "trouble". In all of the Waking State experiences there is the running desire for Happiness. People pursue things that are *even miserable* for the sake of Happiness. It is a strange phenomenon, but that is what human beings do. They all sorts of things just for Happiness, for a very profound kind of Happiness. They may desire endlessly, but what they desire they do not know. And it manifests in the form of desire for various objects, circumstances, people, relations, & such. Thus is the search for Happiness.

At some point there is the recognition that Happiness is not going to be found externally. Happiness is going to be found within. Within means the Self. Right then & there, the Self-Inquiry "Who am I ?" commences. The importance of knowing "Who am I ?" is understood by recognizing that Happiness has its Source within. The place where it is will be experienced is *within*. By Self-Inquiry we find that the very substance of Happiness is "within-ness itself"; hence *Sat-Chot-Ananda*, Existence-Consciousness-Bliss.

So we are detached because we know where happiness is. We are no longer entangled in worldly things. Even if our bodies are active, we are not ourselves bound. Inquire: "Who am I ?"

If there are distracting thoughts of various tendencies in the Mind, inquire: "Who am I ?" "Is this what I am ?" If utterly distracted, inquire: "For whom is this ?" Sense your Existence as distinct from the tendency, from the thought, & from the objective content. "Who am I ?"

Contrary to some popular belief, it is not possible that the experience of awakening happens & still there is something that continues to seek & never gives up. It is a common dualistic belief that one needs to relinquish "looking" or "seeking" spiritually. Just eliminate *seeker*. In the absence of the seeker, what you are seeking is found to be the very nature of yourself. No practice of eliminating seeking is necessary. Such a practice is not necessary if you are a Path of Self-Inquiry. With the Self-Inquiry "Who am I ?" you realize your own nature. There is no separate realizer & separate thing realized. There is no question of seeking then because there is no question of a seeker.





### Reality 164

If there is blame or insult why should one react ? To whom is one supposed to react ? Furthermore who is to react ? One can be completely beyond praise & blame. After all if you have something is true, praise is not make it any more worthwhile. It is blame, it does not really detract from it. Ramana Maharshi's advice was to jump on the side of the criticizer. So his response to be: "Yes I to disagree with this." He had no identity with Ego.

Moreover, a person may pray that one time. The same person may blame later. Then he may praise again. Then he may blame. It is watching the vicissitudes & whimsical nature of a monkey-like Mind. So why take this into account ? If someone offers some statement which provides you with some useful information, that is all to the good. So praise & blame are just the same. "Who is saying what to whom ?"

If there is Bondage, you seek Liberation. If there is no Bondage, there is no question of seeking Liberation. So we just eliminate the bondage. There is the seeker, he should look deeply into his own nature with all this seeking he can possibly muster. Look very deeply. If there is no seeker, that is to say no Ego, no possibility of an Ego, there will be no question of the need of any kind of Self-Inquiry. And hence there will be no seeking. Just take care of the Ego, & do not worry about the seeking.

Some will speak of how they are trying to give up seeking or are trying to give up effort. It is enough if they Inquirer & know themselves. That will suffice, & that is all that is truly needed. That is why, in older texts of *Advaita Vedanta* & in Ramana Maharshi's Teaching, one does not see much by way of injunctions to "give up seeking" as if that were a practice. The instruction is about discerning who you are & abiding in solid self-knowledge.

It is self-evident. In Ego loss, or the Realization of Truth, there is no alternative state. You realize that no ignorance came to be, no ignorant one came to be. It is not now existing & never will be. In that sense, when you realize the Truth, who are realize in all 3 Times simultaneously – Past, Present, & Future.





### Reality 165

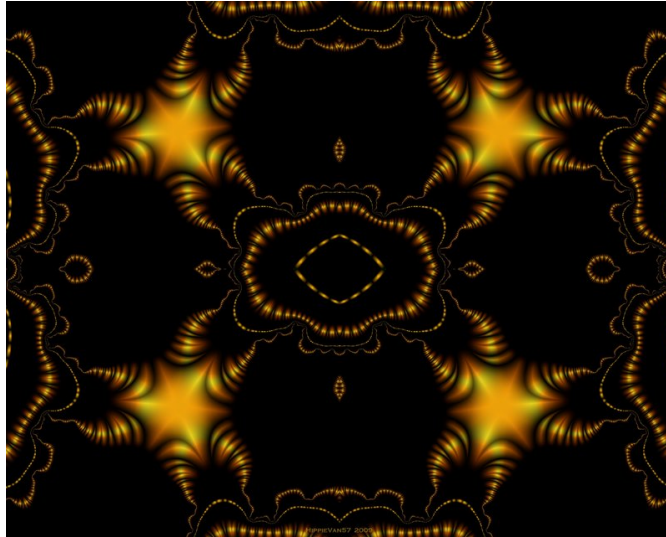
If you see a *Rope* & you mistake it is a *Snake*, when you realize that is only a *Rope*, you realize that there has never been a *Snake*. Your fear of the *Snake*, (*or your desire for the snake*), has vanished, & you realize there was only a *Rope* all along. There was no creation of a *Snake*. There was no "life of the *Snake*". There was no final destruction of a *Snake*. There is only the *Rope* all of the time.

There is no unreality & no destruction of unreality, (*the Snake would be the World, one's own Body, one's own's Personality, any seemingly compelling aspect of the illusion of the World*). In Enlightenment, there is no Individual that has actually become enlightened. What you are our becoming enlightened to, is freedom from the Individuality. Make your Self-Inquiry such that it frees you from the mis-identifications that build up an apparent form to that Individuality.

When we see the "I" just as it is, we find its "I"-ness vanishes & in its place, as Ramana Maharshi says, there is another continuous "I"-"I", the real Self. Seek until you have found that. It is very useful for someone seeking Realization to destroy the various multiple mis-identifications, or the various tendencies of the Mind.

In Ramana Maharshi's Teachings, such are referred to as *vasanas*, tendencies. He said destruction of the *vasanas*, destruction of the tendencies, is the way to be free. Set about destroying those tendencies. An Ego without tendencies is going to have a very difficult time even making an appearance. There is no special "being". What is realized is the same truth in all.

Knowing the Self is knowing Reality. If we know ourselves, we know that which truly is, Existence itself. It is absolute, homogeneous, boundless, without phases or conditions, unborn, not being caused by anything, & indestructible. It always is just as it is, with no form, no division, and no duality of any kind. To know Reality is that is, by direct experience – & it is direct experience, which is indicated by the term "Knowledge" – know your Self.



### Reality 166

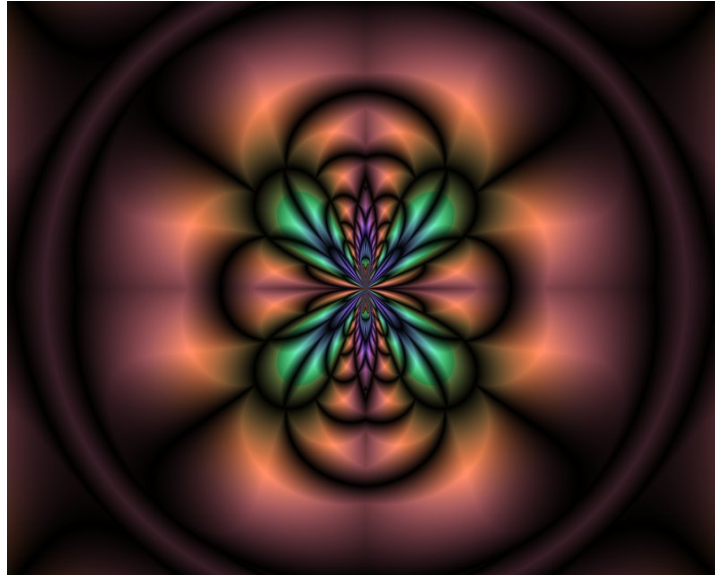
If you take yourself to be an individualized "I", you will conceive of other Individuals & mistake all that to be Reality. If you conceive of an "I" (*aham*), "this" (*idam*) will also be imagined & between the poles of "I" & "thus" swings all Duality & all Illusion. If you know yourself as you are, which is what Ramana Maharshi calls the "I"-less "I", there is no Ego, no Individuality. There is no Ego here, there, or anywhere.

If you define yourself in objective terms, you imagine other objects are existent. Other objects, from subtle to gross, are called "the World". This signifies everything *objectified*, that is everything imagined as being *objectively* existent. All of it starts with yourself being regarded as a particular object (*the body*). If you are an object, there are other objects.

If you inquire deeply within yourself to know yourself & realize the non-objective formless nature of your Being you find that find *That* alone exists. It is the Non-objective, the Formless, having nothing outside itself & nothing inside self. It is just Being, Existence, without any of that imagination.

If you take yourself to be a Body, you think in terms of bodies. When you seek to know Reality, you attempt to do so through the Senses & defined things in bodily, *objective* terms. If you want to know Reality, you should inquire to know whether or not you are the Body. If you are the Body, their other bodies, & you mis-identify yourself as one Body, & other bodies signify other beings. Then, you have self & others. Are you the Body ? Is a transient, *objectified* form of the Body to be equated with your actual Existence, the Reality of Consciousness ?

If you inquire to find out who you are, you will discover your nature to be quite bodiless, ardently unidentified in terms of a Body. That is neither the conditions of the Body nor the location of the Body are yours. When you so inquire, what happens ? Nothing physically changes for you other than all the physical changes that occur normally between Birth & Death. What changes is your state of Knowledge. If you want to see Reality, change your state of Knowledge.



### Reality 167

What a person seeks for in spiritual aspiration, & the seeking of Liberation, or Self-Realization, is not a Sensation. It is not a thought form. Rather, what is thought is a State of Knowledge – Self-Knowledge – an entire spiritual Path, in essence is a change of Knowledge. We might say it is a change from Ignorance to Knowledge, from Illusion to Reality.

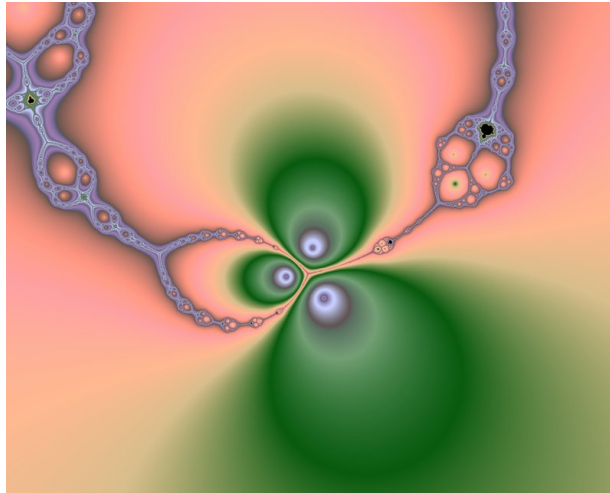
When we rid ourselves of Illusion, we do not rid ourselves as anything real. Ignorance vanishes. Knowledge is seen shining. If you want to know Reality, it is a matter of Knowledge, not a matter of Sensation. If you want to know Reality, start with yourself 1<sup>st</sup>.

Ramana Maharshi would often respond to questions asked of them about the World or about God by saying, "1<sup>st</sup> know yourself & then you can know those things." Of course, if you inquire 1<sup>st</sup>, you know yourself & then there are not any other things to be known. This is because when you know yourself, you come into Knowledge, you are in a State of Being, in which there is no form, in which there is no Individuality, in which there is no bodily definition. The whole idea of "something else" collapses, or is dissolved, & Infinite Consciousness, our Real Being. This is your True Nature.

If you seek to know Reality & want to have direct experience of Truth, make a very earnest one-pointed Self-Inquiry to know yourself. If you want to experience of *That* which is Infinite & Eternal, come into a deeper Knowledge of your Self. When Truth is presented whether it be in a written form such as the recorded Teachings of Ramana Maharshi in an ancient text such as *Ribhu Gita*, *Ashtavakra Gita*, *Avadhut Gita*, the *Upanishads* & so on, or be it in the form of listening to Instruction, most seekers find it easy enough to accept the statement: "It is all One."

It is easy enough to accept those aspects of Teaching that can fit into existing states of Knowledge, which includes your existing perspective. However, that in which you advance the most is that in which your Knowledge, your true Understanding, requires the dissolution or destruction of your present "stand". That in which you gain the most spiritually is that in which you lose some mis-identification. That is when experience dawns without fail. Lose mis-identification, & experience dawns. Gain some spiritual Knowledge that does not threaten – there is nothing "scary" about that, it is just a matter

speaking – the existing perspective, absorb some Knowledge that does not cause you to change where you stand, & it may be of benefit to spiritually. Yet to obtain the best benefit when, in order to comprehend, you must step outside of where you previously took a stand. In this you must lose some aspect of what you erroneously thought of as your Identity. It is in this that Ignorance dissolves. It is there that we see the dissolution of the Ego, the cause of all that is of the nature of futility & of all that is of the character of Suffering in Life.



### Reality 168

To see Reality, see your Self. This is not with the eyes, not with the ears, & not with the existing set of thoughts. If you want to see Reality, you must know yourself free of the body, free of the Senses, free of thought, & free even of the idea of "I". Then you see Reality as it is. Until then, one imagines divisions because he, himself, seems to be divided. If you are individualized, there are other things. If you are in a dualistic State, there seems to be Duality everywhere. If you allow some Unity, "qualified unity", there is some unity everywhere, a Oneness among many.

If you relinquished more definition, there is a greater sense of non-division, "Qualified Non-Duality". Then there is a much greater sense of Oneness. It may be not just One in the many, but all the many in the One, which is deeper. Make a thorough Self-Inquiry, & know yourself. There is "Un-Qualified Non-Duality", *Advaita Vedanta*, which is nonduality without restriction & without limitation. That is just Truth knowing itself – you yourself knowing your Self.

If you know your Self, you know what exists. If you do not know your Self, Life experience is like a thing seen in last night's Dream – seemingly real until you wake yourself up. The purpose of spiritual practice is to wake yourself up, & since waking yourself up, or Self-Realization, is a matter of knowing yourself, do Self-Inquiry. Find out "Who am I ?" within yourself. Since the Self is not known, Reality is not known. Seek to find out who you are.

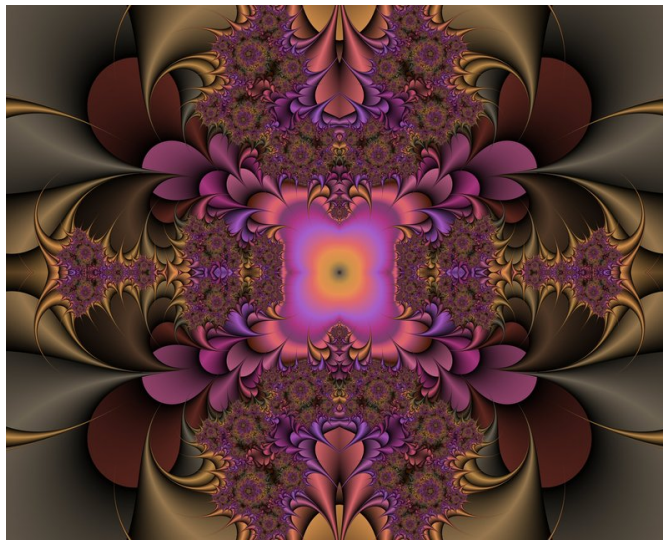
Upon knowing yourself, without a moment's delay, Reality is known as it is. It is not a World. It is not a thought. It is not anything whatsoever. Know yourself & you yourself are the Reality that you know.

What you know is what you are. Do not know yourself, & the one who does not know does not actually exist, nor the does the Illusion that is based on him exist.



The meaning of Illusion is "that which is not." If you do not know your Self, the one who does not know is non-existent. There is no purpose served by abiding in the non-existent. Nor can it really be done, but it appears that way. Know yourself, & abide in the Truth.

What then is the direction to take ? Trace out your own sense of Existence. Start with that which is simplest, because in that which is simplest is found that which is most profound. Start with your own sense of Existence, for that is undeniable. Trace it. Find out what it is. Every time you are relinquish some super-impose definition, some mis-identification, your Knowledge of Reality will be all the clearer for you. Thereupon, what timeless Sages have been saying all along, about what is Real, will become obvious to you. It will be self-evident. In that there is great Peace & great Bliss.



### Reality 169

It is not necessary to ask a question as to: "whether or not I know myself ?" If you do, ask yourself only once. If you determine that you require a deeper Knowledge of who you are, set about knowing yourself. Of course, there are not 2 of you that you could know your Self like an object, as if there were one Self knowing another.

Your Existence is singular. If you asked, do you exist, you do not need to hold a conference between both of you to decide yes or no fun thing is I know that you exist, without even taking thought of it. I do know that? Is it is said that the level that you should make self inquiry, which is a level deeper than the thinking process.

You can start thinking about: "Who am I ?" buy then seek to know your Self deeply. Knowledge of your Self become self evident. The question of: "Have I known myself or not ?" is only theoretical. If you know your Self it is self-evident. If you do not know your Self, that will also be self evident. There will then be possibility of Bondage & Suffering (*or the "experience" of these*).

As long as there Bondage & Suffering, you should seek Liberation or Self-Knowledge. If you seek Self-Knowledge, practice Self-Inquiry, negating what you are not & find a *residuum* that cannot be negated.

The question, "Who am I ?" sums up the *introversion* of Mind. It is the turning inward of your Mind to look at its own Source. Thus your own Being should repose in *Itself*. You own Consciousness should illumine *Itself*. This should be without thinking of *Itself* in terms of an *object*. This is what is indicated by the inquiry: "Who am I ?"

The measuring by: "Do I know myself ?" is not significant. If you take up the practice of deep Self-Inquiry inquiring in Meditation, "Who am I ?" will be sufficient. The question: "Do I know myself ?" is not necessary

If knowing is regarded as Pure Consciousness, meditate on how this is the only knowing that knows. If you regard your thinking or your Senses as the instruments of knowledge, you should make a deeper Self-Inquiry.



## Reality 170

It is wise to question what you regard as being *human*, & whether or not you are in the Body to begin with. As long as you regard yourself as *embodied*, that split will continue, & Non-Duality, though you might have acquaintance with some of its terms, will not be actual experience for you.

Now if you say the people involved from *animals*, we should find out from where the *animals* came. If those *animals* supposedly came from some other kind of Life-form, we should find out from where that comes. If we were going to accept such a way of thinking, why not trace out the Source ? If we do not do so, we are only acting on *supposition*.

Find out your True Nature. Question what you take for granted. If you set about trying to spiritually practice by Self-Inquiry, but you take certain grounds for granted, & leave such a question, such as the idea that you are in the Body, this will limit your Self-Inquiry &, consequently, limit your attainment of Self-Knowledge, or the experience of Non-Dual Truth. Whatever you come to understand in that context will need to fit into the narrow confines of your being encapsulated in the Body.

You know that no Body is Infinite. So how will you gain the experience of the Infinite ? Furthermore, you know that no Body is Eternal. Every Body has a Birth & a Death. So how would you gain the

experience of the Eternal ? If you want to realize *That* which is Eternal & Infinite, you must relinquish the "I am the Body" notion. This includes the idea of being encapsulated in the Body.

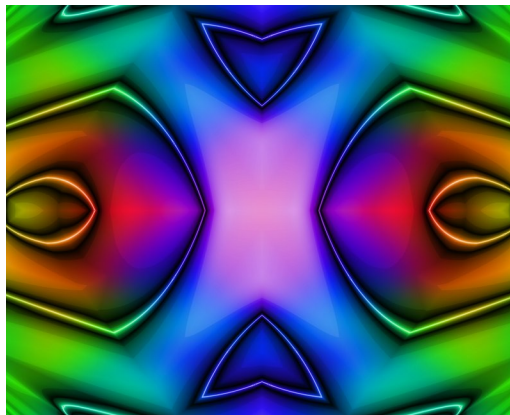
Self-Realization does not interfere with functioning in phenomenal Life. There is no disadvantage in manifest Life due to Self-Knowledge, & no advantage to it in being under Delusion. Your *day-to-day* actions & interactions are not enhanced, not even one bit, by any kind of limitation, Delusions, or Ignorance.

In actual experience – and not in theory conceived prior to actual experience – those who advance of Self-Knowledge do not experience any difficulty with their acting & interacting. Consider it this way you act interact, what you call "function" as well as what you do now with your present set of ideas, or Ignorance. How much better would you do without the Ignorance ?

The idea that as you rise "higher", there will be difficulty in interacting, relating, & doing various activities – this is professed by people only *before* the fact of Self-Realization. Before the actual experience of advancing along lines of Self-Knowledge, such may be the *supposition*.

It is not the actual experience. How would the unreality help us in any way, & how would Reality be a detriment ? This confusion may arise because, sometimes, aspirants & Sages may be seen disregarding some things that seem important to others.

Such Detachment may be towards objects, relations or even to the whole World. The confusion though is not for the aspirants & Sages, but only for the non-comprehending onlooker. Ramana Maharshi had no such problems, for indeed he did not harbor the idea of an Individual to be a Performer action, & the idea of some such thing being *done*. What is to be done to what, where, & by whom, when all exist in the One Self ?



### Reality 171

Self-Realization may take away your fear of Death, but moreover it would reveal the purpose of Life. One of the basic foundation stones in spiritual practice should be the understanding of the purpose of Life. Why are you alive ? What great purpose is there in it ? While you are alive, what great Happiness or Peace can you realize ? You should become keenly aware of these questions & these issues.

Wake up to the Reality, to enjoy unrestricted Bliss, to benefit yourself & all beings by being Liberated from the imagined Bondage, to find Peace & to give Peace, to find a Source of Love & to give Love, &

to find that which is a Source of all that is true, good, & beautiful. If you still believe the World to be real, you should manifest these very things. That is just the start & understanding the purpose of Life.

A strong spiritual practice should be based on understanding the very purpose of Life. If not, there could be the grave mistake of assuming that the negation found in the Teachings of Non-Dual Truth are to be equated with a kind of Existential philosophy that conceives of everything as meaningless.

A seeker may have a previous idea that everything is meaningless, and when learning the highest use of adapter, in which it is pointed out that the whole world is an illusion, equate those 2 Ideas. He was suffering beforehand, & now he has new words for his suffering. That is not the meaning of the *Advaita Vedanta* Teachings.

You will know that you are on the right track by the increasing Peace, Bliss, & real Freedom that you find inside. It is not Life that has become meaningless, but just that your old ideas have become meaningless.

Ramana Maharshi said that those who overlook the Self & take the Body & the Ego to be the Self are the ones who are committing "suicide" & that everyone is a "suicide" every moment when in that illusion. (*This is in the sense that their Life lacks true meaning.*) It would be best for all to stop committing such "suicide".

He says such a "suicide" because it covers over the real Life, which is the true Existence of the self, & veils the real Peace & Bliss. In that sense it is a "suicide", a meaningless dismissal of *That* which is true, in favor of that which is "dead" already, which is Illusion & Ignorance.

Set about doing away with your Ignorance. That is a noble purpose to have. To take away your Ignorance & find Reality. When you do so, the teaching: "this is an Illusion", which is set against the backdrop of knowing "this is Reality", & the real "I" will make deeper sense to you, & you will be very happy at heart.

Now there is meeting in Life. It is just not found in the many *things*. What object is the meaning of your Life ? Are you prepared to stay there any particular object in the world around you is the sum total of your Life ?

Your own inner Nature tells you that such could not be the meaning. Otherwise, you would have been satisfied. The *things* are not the meaning. The *things* are transient &, in the highest Truth, they are in Real. That does not mean there is no Reality. Reality is just not to be found in the *things*. And Illusion occurs upon something Real, not upon something that is nothing. Illusion occurs upon something that is Real. The spiritual Path is for finding that Reality, so that you no longer take something very vast, your own True Nature, & deposit it in something very, very small, the transient objects.





### Reality 172

You have been "inquiring" into the Illusion for a long time. (*Ramana Maharshi would say, in jest, as soon as Self-Inquiry, Atma Vichara pauses, then Loka Vichara, inquiry-into-the-World, commences.*) It is about time that one inquires into the Truth. Everyone has already made a thorough exploration of the unreal. It is not necessary to do more of that. Inquire into Truth. Start with your own essential Existence. Find out what is true about your Being.

Do not and your inquiry at things that are transient physical sensations are transient. Look for truth more deeply. Your own body is transient. No cell in it has the meaning of your life or has the truth of your existence contained in it. Set it (*the Body regarding the meaning of Life*) aside as the definition.. Find out the real Source or Essence of your Existence. More deeply you proceed in this way, the more satisfied you will be. Find your Self, & that it is the perfect Fullness, which is something no object could ever give you. No object can give you what is actually yours.

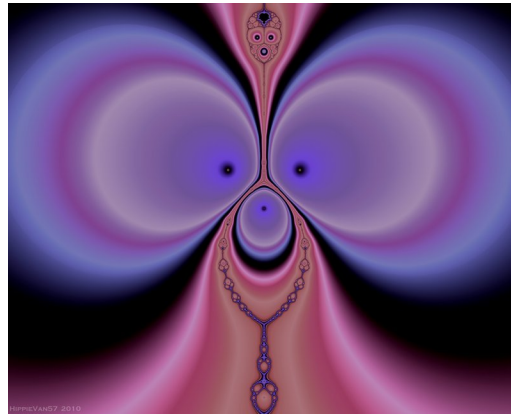
Return to the basic Teaching that commences Self-Inquiry. You will find that at the very beginning of Ramana Maharshi's book "Who am I ?" Start with the basic question: "Where is Happiness ? Inquire: "What is a source of Happiness ?" Every being is looking all the time for Happiness, the deep sense of satisfaction, through innumerable varieties of experience.

Ramana Maharshi points out that the deepest sense of Happiness is felt in the State of Deep Dreamless Sleep in which there are no objects, no Senses, no thoughts – not even thoughts about all that which has just disappeared (*the Waking State*) & not even a thought about yourself.

Yet you are happiest then. You are at peace than. He goes on to point out that which existed in the State of Deep Dreamless Sleep exists right now for you, while you are in the Waking State. The Existence is the same. *Something* else has been added in the Waking State. That addition has subtracted from your Happiness. So subtract, or negate that limitation. Become keenly aware of your own Existence as it really is. That is the perfect Fullness.

When you make deep, meditative self inquiry to know yourself, it does not have other things, even in the subtlest form, close floating in it. There is just one's self, without form and without boundary. If an "I" (*aham*) arises, there is going to be "other" (*idam*). The "other" might be subtle, or it might be gross. It might be other thoughts. It might be other bodies, objects, & so on.

If there is an "I", all that may follow. The way is *inward*. Proceed with an *inward* turned Mind. What is meant by an *outward* turned Mind is a Mind that imagines all those things. An *outward* turned Mind is a Mind that becomes attached to all other objects it has itself imagined. So you are advised: "Turn your Mind inward to find the Truth & to find lasting Happiness."



### Reality 173

An *outward* turned Mind is a Mind busy projecting a World within itself, much like the way the Mind functions in a Dream State. An *outward* turned Mind projects an "I" (*aham*) & a "this" (*idam*) & the interactions between them. The Dream State, itself makes up all the Dream happenings, *subjective* & *objective*. In a Dream, you have *inner* thoughts & have *outer* sensations. Something happens in the Dream & you have some thoughts about it, & maybe some memories about it later in the Dream. You have the *inner* side & the *outer* side. All that is made up of the Dreamy State of Mind.

The Mind functions in the same way & the Waking State. In the Dream, it seems so real. When the Dreams over, you're prepared to say that all of it is unreal. In the Waking State, the case is the same. The Mind functions in the same manner, & why the State occurs, the State & its content seem like they are so real. Upon Self-Inquiry, such turns out to be not so real at all, just like the Dream happenings. An *outward* turned Mind means one conceiving of all that within itself. Dreaming of *inside* & *outside*, *subtle* thoughts & *gross* (physical) Perceptions. An *inward* turned Mind means that which is going to the Source, to the *heart* of that "I", which is revealed not to be an Ego or an Individual, but to be Space-like & vast, the real Being.

It is natural that questions arise. That questions may come from the state of un-clarity is also natural. If there were *clarity*, the question would not rise to begin with. So questions are asked out of the lack of clarity, & answers are given, for the express purpose of gaining *clarity*.

The purpose of the spiritual instruction is to gain the necessary *clarity*. The answer will be at a deeper level than that at which the question was originally formulated. The question may arise about some activity or some particular experience. The answer though, will always be a clarification of one's Identity. That will remove the false stand assumed by the questioner.

Thus you find a final answer. Other answers may come along the way, but the final answer will always be one that resolves the Identity, the question of "Who am I ?", in a deeper manner than the level at which the question was originally formulated. The practice is one of Self-Inquiry.

What is being revealed is Existence itself. *Ramana Maharshi* said: "The only responsibility of the Guru is to reveal his own Existence." This is what he has been doing all along: revealing just that one Existence. The method used here is Self-Inquiry, which is the very same as what *Ramana Maharshi* taught for all those years.